
NLSY97

USER'S GUIDE

A Guide to the Rounds 1–4 Data
National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997

Prepared for the
U.S. Department of Labor by

Center for Human Resource Research
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio
2002

This publication is prepared under contract #J-9-J-9-0007 with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

Acknowledgments

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) cohort is an expansive survey sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, and conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago with assistance from the Center for Human Resource Research (CHRR) at The Ohio State University. Additional funding has been provided by the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

This document pays tribute to the initiators of the NLS, Herbert S. Parnes and Howard Rosen, who had the vision to see that the collection of longitudinal data on the labor force experiences of men and women in the United States could provide a basis for policies fostering more efficient and equitable labor markets. Additional thanks are given to the NLSY97's current principal investigator, James Walker; project director, Rupa Datta; and to the staff at NORC who have contributed to this guide. Special thanks go to CHRR's director, Randall Olsen; Rosella Gardecki, the original guide compiler and an NLSY97 task leader; the NLSY97 archival task leader, Frank Marino; and the other members of the documentation team, Linda Boyer, Tiffany Chase, and Jay Zagorsky.

Jennifer Hering
Amanda McClain
Editors

Help and Information

This manual is one of a set of user-oriented documents available to the NLS research community that contain information on the Original Cohorts (Older Men, Young Men, Mature Women, and Young Women), the NLSY79, the Children of the NLSY79, and the NLSY97. Appendix A in this document contains a quick reference guide to essential information about the NLSY97. Persons needing more information on the NLS in general or the NLS cohort groups are encouraged to obtain copies of the *NLS Handbook*. Summaries of research using the NLS data over the past several decades are presented on-line in the NLS Annotated Bibliography of Research, located at <<http://www.nlsbibliography.org>>. Persons needing detailed information on the other cohorts should read the *NLS of Mature Women User's Guide*, the *NLS of Young Women User's Guide*, the *NLSY79 User's Guide*, and the *NLSY79 Child Handbook 1986–1990*; contact User Services for more information on the men's cohorts. Information on ordering NLS documentation and data sets is available from NLS User Services, 921 Chatham Lane, Suite 100, Columbus, OH 43221-2418; phone (614) 442-7366, fax (614) 442-7329, or e-mail at <usersvc@postoffice.chrr.ohio-state.edu>. Information is also available online at <www.bls.gov/nls>, and orders can be placed online by following the "Ordering Data" link on that website.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97)	3
1.2 The NLS	3
1.3 NLSY97 Sample.....	6
1.4 Content of the NLSY97	8
1.5 NLSY97 Data on CD-ROM	13
1.6 Organization of This Guide.....	14
Chapter 2: Sample Design & Fielding Procedures	17
2.1 Sample Design & Screening Process	19
2.2 Interview Methods.....	23
2.3 Sample Size & Composition.....	33
2.4 Retention and Reasons for Noninterview.....	34
2.5 Sample Weights & Design Effects	37
Chapter 3: Guide to the NLSY97 Data.....	41
3.1 Survey Instruments & Other Documentation.....	43
3.2 Types of Variables	45
3.3 NLSY97 Documentation.....	54
3.4 CD-ROM Search Functions.....	60
Chapter 4: Topical Guide to the NLSY97	63
4.1 Aptitude, Achievement & Intelligence Scores	67
4.1.1 Achievement Tests	68
4.1.2 Administration of the <i>CAT-ASVAB</i>	70
4.1.3 <i>PIAT Math Test</i>	73
4.2 Education.....	75
4.2.1 College Experience.....	82
4.2.2 Educational Status & Attainment.....	85
4.2.3 School-Based Learning Programs	88
4.2.4 School Experience	89
4.2.5 School & Transcript Surveys.....	91
4.3 Employment.....	96
4.3.1 Employers & Jobs	111
4.3.2 Fringe Benefits	115
4.3.3 Gaps in Employment	116
4.3.4 Industry	119
4.3.5 Job Search.....	122
4.3.6 Labor Force Status	124
4.3.7 Occupation	126
4.3.8 Self-Employment Characteristics.....	129
4.3.9 Tenure	131
4.3.10 Time Spent at Work	133
4.3.11 Wages	136
4.3.12 Work Experience	139
4.4 Event History	141
4.5 Expectations, Attitudes, Behaviors & Time Use.....	148
4.5.1 Alcohol Use	150

4.5.2 Attitudes	152
4.5.3 Autonomy & Parental Control.....	159
4.5.4 Cigarette Use	161
4.5.5 Crime, Delinquency & Arrest	163
4.5.6 Drug Use	167
4.5.7 Expectations.....	169
4.5.8 Sexual Activity & Dating	171
4.5.9 Time Use	173
4.6 Family Background & Demographic Characteristics.....	174
4.6.1 Age of Respondent	176
4.6.2 Gender.....	179
4.6.3 Geographic Indicators	180
4.6.4 Household & Neighborhood Environment	183
4.6.5 Household Composition	185
4.6.6 Nonresident Characteristics.....	196
4.6.7 Parent Characteristics.....	200
4.6.8 Race & Ethnicity.....	206
4.6.9 Youth History	208
4.7 Health	210
4.8 Income, Program Participation & Assets.....	214
4.8.1 Assets & Debts.....	216
4.8.2 Income.....	219
4.8.3 Program Participation	222
4.9 Marital History & Fertility.....	225
4.9.1 Fertility, Pregnancy & Children	226
4.9.2 Marital & Marriage-Like Relationships	229
4.10 Training	232
Appendices	235
Appendix A: Quick Reference Guide	237
A.1 Guide to NLS Documentation	237
A.2 About the NLSY97 CD-ROM	238
A.3 How to Get Help	239
A.4 Index to Created Variables, Roster Items, and Symbols.....	240
Appendix B: NLSY97 Glossary of Terms.....	241
B.1 NLS Survey Terms	241
B.2 Terms Used in NLSY97 Interviews.....	247
Index	257

List of Tables and Figures

1.2 Table 1. The NLS: Survey Groups, Sample Sizes, Interview Years & Status	5
1.3 Table 1. NLSY97 Sample Sizes by Subsample, Race/Ethnicity & Gender	7
1.3 Table 2. Round 1 Distribution of NLSY97 Respondents by Household Type.....	8
1.3 Table 3. Round 1 Distribution of NLSY97 Sibling Groups	8
1.4 Table 1. Content of the <i>Youth Questionnaire</i>	11
1.4 Table 2. Content of the <i>Parent Questionnaire</i>	12
1.5 Table 1. Data Releases	14
2.1 Figure 1. Selection of NLSY97 Respondents	19
2.1 Table 1. NLSY97 Round 1 Interview Completion	22
2.1 Table 2. NLSY97 Sampling Status of Youths by Housing Arrangement.....	23
2.2 Table 1. NLSY97 Sample Sizes, Retention Rates, and Fielding Periods	24
2.2 Figure 1. Priority for Choosing Responding Parent	28
2.2 Table 2. NLSY97 Youths by Age and Parent Interview Availability	29
2.3 Table 1. Racial, Ethnic & Gender Composition of NLSY97 Sample.....	34
2.4 Table 1. Retention Rates by Sample Type and Gender.....	35
2.4 Table 2. Reason for Noninterview by Gender	35
2.4 Table 3. Reason for Noninterview by Sample Type.....	36
2.4 Table 4. Reason for Noninterview by Race/Ethnicity	36
2.5 Figure 1. Sampling Weight Variable for All Rounds.....	38
3.1 Table 1. Sample Question Names by Youth Questionnaire Section.....	44
3.1 Table 2. Sample Question Names in Screener and Parent Questionnaires	45
3.2 Figure 1. Sample PAPI Roster Grid.....	48
3.2 Figure 2. Example: Variables in CAPI-Generated School Roster for Round 2	49
3.2 Figure 3. How Rosters Are Created.....	49
3.2 Figure 4. Rosters Included Each Round	51
3.3 Figure 1. NLSY97 Questionnaire Item Codeblock	55
3.3 Figure 2. NLSY97 Created Variable Codeblock	55
4.1 Table 1. Aptitude, Achievement & Intelligence Scores Subtopics and Universe Restrictions.....	67
4.1.2 Figure 1. Contents of the <i>CAT-ASVAB</i>	70
4.2 Table 1. Education Subtopics and Universe Restrictions	76
4.2 Figure 1. Round 1 Schooling Section	78
4.2 Figure 2. Rounds 2–4 Schooling Section.....	79
4.2 Table 2. School Numbers in the NEWSCHOOL Roster	81
4.2.3 Table 1. Definitions of School-Based Learning Programs	88
4.3 Table 1. Employment Subtopics and Universe Restrictions.....	98
4.3 Figure 1. Rounds 1–3 Employment Flowchart	100
4.3 Figure 2. Round 4 Employment Flowchart	102
4.3 Figure 3. NLSY97 Unique ID Numbers	105
4.3.2 Figure 1. Fringe Benefits Available through Employer.....	115
4.3.4 Table 1. Industry of NLSY97 Respondents at Current or Most Recent Employee Job	120
4.3.5 Figure 1. Possible Job Search Actions	122
4.3.7 Table 1. Occupation of NLSY97 Respondents at Current or Most Recent Employee Job	127
4.3.12 Table 1. Work Experience Created Variables	139
4.5 Table 1. Expectations, Attitudes, Behaviors & Time Use Subtopics and Universe Restrictions	148
4.5.1 Table 1. Age Respondent First Drank Alcohol	150
4.5.2 Table 1. Universe and Reference Parents for Parent Attitude Questions	153
4.5.2 Figure 1. Youth Descriptors of Attitude toward Self.....	157

4.5.4 Table 1. Age Respondent First Smoked a Cigarette	161
4.5.6 Table 1. Age Respondent First Used Marijuana.....	167
4.5.6 Table 2. Age Respondent First Used Cocaine/Other Drugs.....	168
4.5.7 Table 1. Topics of Expectations Questions.....	170
4.5.8 Table 1. Age Respondent First Had Sex	172
4.6 Table 1. Family Background & Demographic Characteristics Subtopics and Universe Restrictions.....	174
4.6.1 Table 1. Age of NLSY97 Respondents as of 12/31/96	176
4.6.1 Table 2. Age of NLSY97 Respondents as of Interview Date.....	176
4.6.1 Table 3. Comparison of Round 1 Variables KEY!AGE and CV_AGE_INT_DATE	177
4.6.2 Table 1. NLSY97 Composition by Gender and Sample Type.....	179
4.6.3 Figure 1. Number of NLSY97 Respondents and States by Census Region	180
4.6.5 Figure 1. Definitions of Relationships in Household Roster	186
4.6.5 Figure 2. Creation of Round 1 Rosters Based on Screener Data.....	189
4.6.5 Table 1. Example Structure of the Round 1 HHI2 Relationship Data.....	191
4.6.5 Table 2. Round 1 ID Variables for Key Relatives of NLSY97 Respondents	193
4.6.5 Table 3. Examples of UID Codes.....	195
4.6.6 Table 1. Data Collected for Nonresident Relatives in Round 1.....	196
4.6.7 Figure 1. Assets Held by the Responding Parent.....	202
4.7 Table 1. Health Subtopics and Universe Restrictions.....	210
4.7 Table 2. Knowledge about Pregnancy and STDs among Youths Born in 1983 (Round 1).....	212
4.8 Table 1. Income, Program Participation & Assets Subtopics and Universe Restrictions	214
4.8.1 Figure 1. NLSY97 Asset and Debt Categories.....	217
4.8.3 Figure 1. Government Assistance Programs	222
4.8.3 Table 1. Created Program Participation Summary Variables	223
4.9 Table 1. Marital History & Fertility Subtopics and Universe Restrictions.....	225
4.9.2 Table 1. Number of Respondents Married or Cohabiting.....	229
4.10 Table 1. Training Subtopics and Universe Restrictions.....	232
A.1 Table 1. List of NLS Documentation.....	237
A.2 Figure 1. NLSY97 Areas of Interest.....	239